

PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
BIOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF WASHINGTON

A NEW JIRD FROM LIBYA

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United States National Museum

The new jird described below was obtained as the result of field work sponsored by the Office of Naval Research on contract Nonr 1808(00); the specimens are now part of the collections of the United States National Museum.

All measurements are in millimeters and capitalized color terms are from Ridgway "Color Standards and Color Nomenclature" 1912.

Meriones shawi azizi subsp. nov.

Type.—Adult male, skin and skull, U.S.N.M. 302242 from 5 km. SE Derna, Cyrenaica, Libya. Obtained 9 November 1955 by H. W. Setzer, original no. 2717.

Specimens examined.—Two, both from the type locality.

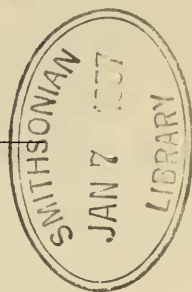
Diagnosis.—General overall dorsal coloration near Buffy Brown gradually shading over the sides and flanks to a line of pure color near Pinkish Cinnamon; entire underparts, dorsal surfaces of hands and feet, and small postauricular spot pure white; tail markedly bicolor, slightly darker than general overall dorsal color and with a black pencil on the dorsal surface for about the distal one-fourth. Skull average for the species; auditory bullae well inflated; zygomatic arches relatively broad; rostrum relatively heavy; interorbitum relatively wide; and braincase relatively well inflated.

Measurements of the type specimen.—Total length 278; length of tail 143; length of hind foot 33; length of ear from notch 19; occipitonasal length of skull 36.4; length of palate 19.2; length of auditory portion of auditory bulla 12.4; crown length of upper toothrow 4.8; least interorbital breadth 6.6; length of nasals 14.0; breadth of rostrum at level of antorbital foramen 4.9; greatest breadth across zygomatic arches 20.9.

Comparisons.—*Meriones shawi azizi* differs from *M. s. shawi*, as known from Gheminez, Libya, in markedly darker dorsal coloration, somewhat longer tail, somewhat shorter hind foot, and a markedly reduced postauricular spot. Skull more rounded dorsally, wider interorbitally, rostrum wider, zygomatic arches wider, auditory bullae shorter and more inflated ventrally, and upper incisors narrower.

Remarks.—This new subspecies needs comparison with no other named subspecies of *shawi* since the only other two kinds are farther removed geographically than is the nominate form.

These animals were apparently not common near Derna. They occurred



in a fallow barley field of dark rocky clay soil. The common animal associated with them was *Gerbillus campestris dodsoni* which we trapped in rather large numbers.

This jird is named for Abdel Aziz Salah in thanks for the many kindnesses shown me in Cairo.